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THE LONG TRANSFORMATION FOR A DEMOCRATIC WORLD ORDER

Yoshikazu Sakamoto

I. Introduction: Contemporary Historic Developments

The post–Cold War world has witnessed the following four fundamental developments, all of which are unprecedented in history.

A. Unipolar World Military Order

The emergence of unipolar world military order centers on the United States as the hegemonic global military power. It is true that the Roman Empire, for instance, built a unipolar military order; but it was, in fact, a regional unipolarity in a world consisting of other regional empires in China, India, and so forth, which were mutually isolated with a low degree of interaction. This is the first time global military unipolarity has come into existence.

It must at the same time be noted that the military superiority (or even supremacy) of the United States, unchallenged by any comparable contender, by no means implies that the United States is militarily omnipotent. The United States is incapable of putting Bosnia, Serbia, Liberia, Somalia, or Rwanda under its military control, let alone Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and so forth. No doubt the United States is at the top of the world military pyramid, but it is incapable of keeping all stones beneath in order. This is probably a consequence not so much of the limits of U.S. military power as of the limits to military power as such, particularly in the contemporary world characterized by the three following developments.

B. Single Capitalist Global Market

It is true that, since the sixteenth century, the various regions of the world have been incorporated by European powers into the capitalist world. Yet, even in the first half of the twentieth century, many “underdeveloped” societies still constituted a “dual society,” comprising both modernized sectors and a sizable traditional rural sector that had been only remotely affected by modern capitalist penetration. During the “development decades” which began in the early 1960s, the capitalist world economy rapidly engulfed the “traditional sectors,” intensifying what the dependence school conceptualized as the “development of underdevelopment.” Dual society began to be integrated into a capitalist world economy.

It was, however, in the 1960s that the Soviet Union, where the postwar reconstruction was well under way, proclaimed an alternative economic order—the socialist COMECON. This was different from the pre – World War II period, when the lone USSR was secluded from the world economy dominated by the capitalist blocs, including the fascist camps. Now, with the collapse of the socialist system, the world as a whole has begun to constitute a single capitalist market economy for the first time in modern history.

C. The Universalization of Nationalism

It goes without saying that nationalism, which originated in the West of modern times, spread to non-Western societies, taking the form of anti-Western nationalism, which culminated in the massive tricontinental decolonization and national liberation movements in the post–World War II period. Paradoxically, the Soviet Union, which originally served as a source of ideological inspiration for the colonial peoples engaged in the struggle against Western imperialism, turned out—after a short period of Lenin’s defense of “national self-determination” aimed at disintegrating the tsarist empire—to be a reconsolidated Russian empire. In the aftermath of World War II, the empire extended to Eastern Europe.

In the course of the collapse of the Soviet Empire, nationalism—which had historically prevailed in the West and then the

“Third World” — spread to the “last empire,” giving rise to the eruption of ethno-nationalist demands of captive nationalities of the former USSR. For the first time in history, nationalism has been universally put into effect.

D. The Globalization of Democracy

Policies and movements for democratization were persistently obstructed by antidemocratic forces even in the “advanced” countries such as nineteenth-century Britain and France. When the three democratic powers — Britain, France, and the United States — laid the groundwork for the Versailles settlement, the system was to be challenged by two counterforces.

Fascism in Germany, Japan, and Italy staged a frontal attack on democracy, rejecting it as illegitimate, unworkable, and/or corrupt. State socialism of the Soviet Union opposed Western democracy by proclaiming that proletarian democracy was genuinely democratic while bourgeois democracy was a fake. While fascism was openly antidemocratic, state socialism was ostensibly “prodemocratic,” though both were against liberal democracy.

As a result of the demise of the fascist Axis in 1945, the world was divided into two camps, which the West defined in terms of “democracy versus authoritarianism” but which the East characterized as the conflict between “two democracies,” with the East standing for “democratic centrism,” “people’s democracy,” and so forth. The adoption of democratic rhetoric by the East was the incipient universalization of democracy as the ideological source of political legitimation. This gave rise to an interesting situation in which it became increasingly difficult and risky even for an authoritarian regime to openly defy democracy as the ultimate goal of polity, if not its present reality.

Thus, after the demise of state socialism, the authoritarian regimes of developing countries must—at least rhetorically, and at times apologetically — acknowledge through the promise of election and the transfer of power to civilian government, etc. that the authoritarian system is a transitional device necessitated by the development requirements of a less developed country that will ultimately turn into a democracy. Or, they may acknowledge that, although the *Western* model of democracy

does not fit the sociocultural conditions of the country, they will develop their *own model* of democracy. This is in sharp contrast to the Nazis or Japanese militarists, who held the view that neither were their democracies of their own model nor were their regimes a transitional step toward ultimate democratization. Today, antidemocracy cannot claim legitimacy in its own right. In short, in the post – Cold War world, democracy has gained universality for the first time in history.

I have identified four global trends: (1) unipolarization of world military order, (2) globalization of the capitalist market economy, (3) universalization of nationalism, and (4) globalization of democracy. These four trends can be considered to be the manifestations of two deeper processes of global change. The first two trends are reflections of the trend toward *internationalization*, i.e., they refer to the process that cuts across the national boundaries, transcending and eroding the nation-state system. The latter two reflect the deeper process of *democratization*, i.e., that the universalization of nationalism refers to the trend toward international equality or equality of nations, and that the globalization of democracy is the manifestation of the struggle for and the establishment of the equality of universal human rights. The first process refers to horizontal *widening* and the latter to vertical *deepening*.

II. Dialectics of Modern History

Although these four dynamics (or the two underlying deeper trends) are the salient features of the post–Cold War world, they are not the consequences of the end of the Cold War. They are manifestations of the longer-term, more fundamental dynamics of change that have characterized modern history. In fact, the end of the Cold War (and the beginning of the Cold War, for that matter) were the consequences of this more fundamental historical dynamic of change that took these particular forms at particular moments in history. What, then, is the deeper historical dynamic, and what are the engines of modern historical change?

Reflecting the sense of history related to the present global transformation, one can define the contemporary phase of historical development in various terms such as “post-West-

phalian," "postindustrial," or "postmodern." It is not certain whether we are truly in a "post-" phase, nor is it clear what a "post-" phase really means beyond the negative implication that things are no longer as they were. Paradoxical as it may sound, it is through the identification of the deeper *continuing* dynamic that underlies the change into the "post-" phase that the *discontinuity* between the past and the "post-" can be appreciated.

Along these lines, we argue that underlying the historical change in the modern times are the fundamental contradictions on the following three dimensions, in terms of which major conflicts and changes in modern history can be accounted for: (1) capitalism (C) vs. socialism (S); (2) state nationalism (N) vs. internationalism (I); and (3) democracy (D) vs. authoritarianism (A).

By modern history, we refer to the period since the latter half of the eighteenth century, when these contradictions became increasingly prominent as the result of the interrelated emergence of industrial capitalism, political nationalism, and liberal democracy in major Western "advanced" countries.¹

Further, it is not only the contradictions of these three dimensions but also the uneven development of the contradictions and their components that generated complex dialectics of modern history. Nationalism and democracy as well as capitalism (and their respective antitheses) developed unevenly. Early-starter capitalism gave rise to the metropole's domination against the periphery's dependence; early-starter state nationalism led to imperialism vis-à-vis colonized peoples; and early-starter democracy generated international ideological conflict in terms of human rights. These complex contradictions brought about "world conflict" and consequent changes in the sense that no society or state could be immune from the structural constraints of these contradictions.

Focusing on the dynamics of change in modern history, we can develop a perspective on world politics that is quite different from the state-centric "realist" paradigm. The latter is predicated on the idea that the sovereign state is the basic unit that constitutes international relations. Just as society and the state were conceptualized in terms of the collectivity of individuals, international relations were also seen from an atomistic perspective, treating the sovereign state as the indivisible basic unit.

International relations are defined essentially as anarchy. This realist view is fundamentally static and unidimensional in the sense that it presupposes the persistence of the state system itself and deals merely with the mechanistic vicissitude of interstate geopolitical balance of power. Thus, it is incapable of accounting for global structural changes in history as we witness it today.

In other words, the question we address today concerns not only the interpretation of the global change under way but also the change in the *conceptualization* of historical change.

III. Uneven International Structural Change

Because the modern international system originated in Europe, we must examine the conceptualization of historical change with reference to European history. This is not, of course, the same as holding a Eurocentric view of world history.

Europe in the Middle Ages was ruled by the feudal elite, both secular and ecclesiastic. There was a high degree of homogeneity among the ruling elite. This homogeneity was challenged at the time of the Reformation and the Religious War. As the religious cleavage of the ruling elite was politically accommodated through the Westphalian settlement, the European elite class restored an increasing degree of political homogeneity as the secular ruling elite. It is true that the dynastic states of absolute monarchy engaged in constant warfare. Although absolutist states created a state of international anarchy in terms of power politics, it is no longer a state of anarchy in terms of values. Statecraft and diplomacy were no longer dictated by the will of God(s) but by *raison d'état*. The secular rules of the game were premised on a set of values shared by the elite. Wars, though numerous, were all limited wars. They were fought by rather expensive mercenaries to avoid mutual annihilation of the elite. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a number of peace proposals in favor of establishing an international organization were presented by publicists (Éméric Crucé, Duc de Sully, Abbé de Saint-Pierre, and others).² In the eighteenth century, reference was often made to "the Republic of Europe," and "the Family of Nations." All these suggest that there was a European community of aristocratic elite who shared a set of common values. It is

not too much to say that, in effect, Europe was under the condominium of warring nobilities.

This European community of homogeneous elite was first challenged by Great Britain, which departed from it at the time of the Glorious Revolution when the gradual merger of feudal nobilities and the bourgeoisie began to take shape. This process was further promoted by the independence of the United States through the American Revolution, which, as emphasized by Edmund Burke in the British Parliament, was essentially the extension of the ideology of the Glorious Revolution. The third to secede from the European aristocratic community was France in the days of the French Revolution.

Two points must be noted in connection to this. First, the dissociation of these three countries from the European aristocratic elite community was not a mere realignment in the context of the power game of homogeneous elite; it was de-alignment stemming from the structural transformation of the political regime under the control of the new elite who were heterogeneous to the European elite of *ancien régime*.

Second, it was these three countries (Britain, France, and the United States) that, despite significant variations, consisted of the essentially common structural complex of “capitalism (C) – nationalism (N) – democracy (D)” and acted as the early-starter developed countries in the world of the last two centuries. It is this C-N-D model that played the role of the engine of world political and economic development, constituting what may be called “a core bloc” in the world system.

A core bloc is not merely an aggregation of states. As the “historic bloc” in Gramsci’s terminology implies, a “bloc” refers to the *structure of society* that comprises contradictions with the dynamic of historical change.³ By the end of the eighteenth century, the bloc of those three countries began to form a new segment of international society with the potential of structural transformation of the traditional dominant system of Europe. It was a “core” bloc because, by the middle of the nineteenth century, it definitively began to play the role of the engine of global transformation, setting the rule of development (and underdevelopment) for the rest of the world.

In particular, the bloc of Britain and France generated the forces of significant change: Britain represented industrial capi-

talism and liberalism, and France democracy and nationalism. They both gave birth even to socialism as a social movement. The impact of this complex was illustrated by the continental, though mostly abortive, revolution of 1848, which was a complex combination of the recurrent revolt against the old status disparity buttressed by the European reactionary regime and the incipient revolt against the new class disparity caused by the forces of industrial capitalism. Political democracy was the integral part of the core bloc.

To counteract the impact of the early-starter core bloc, Germany, Japan, and Italy began to catch up with the core bloc in the latter half of the nineteenth century by remolding their structure in pursuit of the complex “capitalism (C)–nationalism (N)–authoritarianism (A).” This model was aimed at building a strong capitalist state at the expense of democracy. The C-N-A model was a reaction of late-starter developed empires to the core bloc empires, C-N-D. The contrast between the two models suggests that capitalism and nationalism can develop in combination with authoritarianism — not necessarily with democracy — and that the most crucial distinction between the early-starter empires and the late-starter empires is the presence or absence of political democracy (D).

By the end of the nineteenth century, the world was roughly divided into the C-N-D and C-N-A empires. It is a small wonder that socialist (S) forces alienated by both formed the international socialist movements that cut across the boundaries of the two camps. In the course of the armed conflict between the two, fragile late-starter empires (Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian) collapsed, one of which was transformed into a state socialist empire, S-N-A.

While the C-N-D empires initiated the formal institutionalization of the bloc by establishing an international, intergovernmental organization (C-I-D), i.e., the League of Nations, and while the S-N-A Soviet Union set up a tight organization of international, countergovernmental movement (SIA), i.e., the Communist International, the Nazis, and the Japanese militarists remained un-international because of their ethnocentrism and exclusionary system at home and abroad.

The war between the C-N-D bloc, namely the United Nations, and the C-N-A Axis led to the latter’s defeat. It was not only a

military but also a political and ideological defeat. The C-N-D bloc transformed the C-N-A camp by changing (A) into (D), that is, democratization and demilitarization of the C-N-A regime, which was thereby incorporated into the Western bloc (C-N-D).

The post-World War II world was polarized into two blocs, one headed by the C-N-D core bloc and the other by the S-N-A superpower. The end of the Cold War was the consequence of a global structural change in which the core bloc of the C-N-D model prevailed over the S-N-A countermodel. So far, we have dealt with developed empires, whether early-starter or late-starter. Except for small powers in the North, the rest of the world (with a few exceptions) consisted of former colonies. Despite the qualitative difference in historical experience between the late-starter empires and former colonies, the latter have tended to adopt either the C-N-A model (e.g., the “bureaucratic-authoritarian model”) or the S-N-A model (e.g., the Maoist model) mainly because all of them, whether empires or colonies, have one characteristic in common: *late-starter vis-à-vis* the C-N-D core bloc.

IV. Unending Historical Contradictions

Looking at the history of the modern world in terms of the structural change of international society, we can make the following observations.

- Modern history can be considered as the process through which the core bloc of early-starter C-N-D regimes played a twofold, often contradictory, role. On the one hand, it stimulated the development of late-starter societies, but, on the other, it constrained the development of the latter. It is through this dual function that the C-N-D bloc penetrated the rest of the world system.
- The penetration by the C-N-D bloc first took the form of successive secessions from the dominant international elite and regime structure and then, in turn, began to assume a dominant international position to transform the elite and regime structure of the non-C-N-D world. Both the decisive secession and the decisive transformation were carried out through historic war, including the world wars and the Cold War. It

must, therefore, be noted that the wars of historic importance were not merely the function of the geopolitical rise and fall of great powers but the indication of a more fundamental structural change through which non-C-N-D regimes had been assimilated by or incorporated into the C-N-D regime core bloc.

- Of all societies in the world system, the C-N-D bloc (plus some smaller nations in Europe) is an exception where capitalist development and nation-state building went hand in hand with political democratization. This was made possible, in part, by their initial successful secession, particularly in the case of Britain and the United States, which could enjoy “splendid isolation.” Conversely, France, which was more directly exposed to the impact of European *ancien régime*, had to undergo a series of revolutions and counterrevolutions. In brief, the C-N-D bloc held a historically advantaged and exceptional position.
- The international penetration and expansion of the C-N-D bloc, therefore, did not proceed in a linear way but had to face the statist/nationalist resistance of the historically disadvantaged, late-starter regimes. The regimes of late-starter societies reacted by resorting to the building of a “strong state” as the engine of developmental “catching up” and national independence; and the strong state was associated with authoritarianism, collectivism, ethnocentrism, and so forth. The irony of history is that the democratic development in the C-N-D bloc—almost of necessity—gave rise to authoritarian development in other societies. This was a systemic constraint of uneven world development.
- Confronting the strong nationalist liberation struggle of peripheralized former colonies, the core bloc empires faced a dilemma derived from the contradiction between the core bloc’s defense of state nationalism and democracy (N-D) at home and its practice of imperial authoritarian domination abroad. The empires of the core bloc were destined to disintegrate through the withdrawal of their external political expansion. In return, the core bloc began to restructure the C-N-D bloc by consolidating its institutional frameworks in the expanded C-N-D region in the North, such as EC (EU), the

Trilateral Commission, G-7, NAFTA, IMF/World Bank, and various other regional or global organizations.

- It should by now be clear that since the eighteenth century, the C-N-D regime bloc has played the active role of the primary engine of global structural change, giving rise to a variety of reactive developments; and, while the bloc consisted of “state-nations” (N), capitalism (C) generated the trend toward internationalization, and democracy (D) toward the perpetual process of deepening democratization — the two basic trends mentioned above that are at work today in promoting global transformation.

The apparent globalization of the C-N-D bloc model led to the notion of “the end of history.” In reality, however, history cannot come to an end with the globalization of the C-N-D model because its dynamic comprises fundamental contradictions.

First, while the capitalist development of necessity gives rise to uneven, unequal, and inequitable development, democracy is committed to equality and equity. While capitalist internationalization brings advantages to those who have capital, technology, knowledge, and other resources to profit from internationalization, e.g., multinationals,—which, in turn, make the advantaged even more privileged—the disadvantaged tend to fail to benefit from internationalization. In fact, they even suffer from it, often being more marginalized than ever, —witness the case of indigenous peoples.

Second, capitalist internationalization, utilizing the resources at the disposal of the advantaged, normally proceeds far ahead of political democratization, which must rely on the mobilization of the disadvantaged. There is an inevitable time lag between the two. Thus, there are a number of instances that demonstrate that the multinational capital penetrated the South prior to the growth and spread of democracy and that capitalism was coupled with ruthless authoritarianism, which was to be democratized at a later stage, involving an enormous cost in terms of human rights. This applies to the newly industrializing economies model (NICs or NIES)—particularly the “successful” Asian NIES—which are now almost regarded by the elite of an increasing number of developing countries as *the* model after the demise of the alternative state socialist model.

Third, the failure of a number of developing countries to emulate the NIES led to a disorganized economy characterized by the enormous disparity between the rich and poor, the poverty of the marginalized poor whose human dignity and identity tend to be ensured only by religious fundamentalism, and the intensified conflict defined in terms of ethno-national “imagined community” over the resources that are perceived to be in short supply (a zero-sum perception vis-à-vis “the other”).

Fourth, even in successful NIES, environmental degradation has gone from bad to worse as a result of the growth-first policy of the elite, the export-oriented depletion of natural resources, and the penetration of consumer culture promoted by multinational and local enterprises. This refers to a new dimension that questions the validity and viability of the fundamental ecological premise of the C-N-D model.

Fifth, although the C-N-D bloc has penetrated almost every corner of the globe as a result of the demise of the state socialist bloc, there are regime and elite structures that continue to maintain themselves impervious to the C-N-D penetration. They are small in number, isolated, and even helpless, particularly in connection with the local conflict to which they are a party with little support of the international community: Iran-Iraq, India-Pakistan, North Korea–South Korea/U.S., and, to a lesser extent, Israel-Arab states. It is precisely this helplessness that has driven them to build a nuclear fortress. Without it, the regime and elite structure, in their views, would have been transformed in accordance with the dictates of the C-N-D model. The last phase of the global penetration of the C-N-D bloc will have to confront a new challenge—nuclear proliferation.

V. Critical Global Problematiques

Against this background, it is clear that history cannot come to an end. It is true that modern history demonstrated that the expansion and penetration of the C-N-D bloc model was irresistible, as shown by the defeat of the Axis powers and the collapse of the socialist camp, but this was not a Hegelian culmination of *Weltgeist*. History has entered a new phase in which the basic contradictions of the modern world have

become all the more visible thanks to the very global “triumph” of the C-N-D model that has been the core of modernity.

Indeed, the globalization of the C-N-D model amounts to the formation of what one may call “the international community” today. It is, therefore, no accident that the organizer of this conference has linked “the international community” with “the emergence of world (dis)order,” and, to the extent that the C-N-D model has been globalized, its contradictions have also assumed the character of the global problematiques.

An international consensus seems to have formed over the last couple of decades that the global problematiques concern the following four categories of value: peace and security; development and social justice; human rights and democracy; and ecological balance and resource conservation.⁴ The question is: What critical global problems in those areas stem from the fundamental contradictions?

A. Peace/Disparity Problematique

Fortunately, the greatest threat to humankind, the global nuclear holocaust, has receded as a result of the ending of the Cold War. The subsequent emergence of a unipolar world military order suggests that the decreased danger of nuclear war is a product not so much of the progress in nuclear disarmament as the accession of the United States to the position of unrivaled nuclear hegemony. The new world military order is extremely hierarchical, reflecting the uneven development of industrialism and science/technology in modern history. It is also this uneven industrial/technological development that has made it possible for the United States to internationalize the military order into which most major powers have been incorporated. The multinational coalition forces at the time of the Gulf War are a case in point. In the military area, too, it is the advantaged who have first profited from internationalization. It is natural that this military order, which is highly nonegalitarian, as exemplified by the nuclear nonproliferation regime, should face strong criticisms.

The danger of unequal order is that it gives plausible legitimation to the demand of subordinate powers for equality. Besides the danger of nuclear proliferation, there has been great

difficulty in legitimating bans or restrictions on the transfer of conventional arms. These have been opposed not only by the military-industrial complex of the North but also by the regimes of the South on the grounds that the measures will perpetuate the North-South military disparity, in addition to economic unevenness. It is due to this aspiration to reduce military inequality that developing countries have wasted their wealth by purchasing highly sophisticated, expensive modern weapons.

Military and economic disparity are the function of the uneven development of modern industrialism; all contradict the search for a more egalitarian, democratic international order. The desire for egalitarian military order can lead to a world where every nation is equally equipped, for instance, with nuclear weapons, but it may also lead to a world where every nation is equally disarmed. The latter scenario will be feasible only if initiatives are taken by the advantaged for dismantling the arsenals of modern weapons, giving priority to a democratic world order rather than retaining the historically acquired privileges, in order to minimize the adverse effects of uneven industrial development in terms of peace and security.

While both nuclear weapons and modern conventional arms have their own logic as military hardware that affects politics, another peace/security issue involves politics and economy as independent variables with military components as dependent. It is what is generally called "regional conflict," "ethnic conflict," or "internal war." As the main form of conflict in the post-Cold War period, it is defined in terms of ethno-cultural or even civilizational clash escalated into armed dispute. The underlying argument is that the East-West ideological conflict has been replaced by ethno-cultural conflict, which, allegedly, is existentially more deeply rooted in human conditions into which people were born than the ideological contest that was essentially a matter of choice.

There are, however, several questionable points in the argument that ethno-cultural groups of different cultures or civilizations are bound to generate conflict, to fight, and to kill each other.

First, ethno-cultural difference is not the same as ethno-cultural conflict. The question that can rightly be asked is: "Under

what conditions will groups of different cultures come into conflict; and under what conditions will the conflict turn into violent conflict?" The shift from difference to conflict and from conflict to armed conflict cannot be accounted for in terms of the cultural difference that remains unaltered.

Second, this ethno-cultural or civilizational determinism overlooks a number of instances in which people of different cultural, religious, or civilizational backgrounds live together peacefully.

Third, the very idea that there is inevitable conflict or incompatibility among cultures is a reflection of a particular type of culture. It has often been said, for instance, that the conflict between Christian civilization and Islamic civilization is inevitable, but this is simply untrue because a number of Christians and Moslems peacefully coexist in various parts of the world. It is true however, that each has often been perceived by the other as incompatible. Perceived incompatibility has been a salient feature of the two religious civilizations that share one particular characteristic, namely monotheistic universalism. Many polytheistic cultures take a more or less eclectic attitude toward other cultures and religions.

Thus, cultural/civilizational determinism is not a tenable scientific proposition but rather a political ideology designed to rationalize conflict in defense of one's interests, which are not cultural but political and socioeconomic. The fact that most of the "regional conflicts" or "ethnocide" today take place in the underdeveloped areas or the former state socialist regions—all under economic disorder and social anomie—indicates that the fundamental problems are under- or mal-development that brought about unequal and inequitable distribution of resources among and within ethno-national groups. It would appear that, here again, the ethno-national or civilizational conflict is a manifestation of the deeper contradiction between uneven development and subsequent exclusion on the one hand and the demand for equal rights and nondiscriminatory distribution of resources on the other.

B. Development/Democracy Problematique

Just as peace and security issues are closely interrelated with development issues, the latter, in turn, are interrelated with democracy and human rights issues.

First, modern capitalist development has proceeded by giving rise to the disparity between the North and South and also within the South (and North). Even in early-nineteenth-century Britain, where early-starter industrial capitalism developed under the most favorable conditions as compared with late-starter capitalism, the disparity between rich and poor was enormous and the conditions of workers were inhumane, as evidenced by the exclusion of Charles Dickens and Friedrich Engels from parliamentary representation. All late-starter capitalism, including that of contemporary developing countries, sought economic growth at the expense of peoples' democratic participation. The political exclusion of workers (and peasants) made it even more difficult for them to attain a decent living standard through the existing institutional channels; hence, a series of riots and repressive measures including the universal practice of torture. To avoid the enormous human cost involved, it is imperative to pursue an alternative, namely *democratic economic development*.

Another dimension of contradiction between development on the one hand and democracy and human rights on the other concerns the late-starter underdeveloped societies exemplified by most of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and the Caribbean. The people and children who are suffering severely from poverty, starvation, and malnutrition are so marginalized by world capitalist development that they are, in effect, dispensable and disposable according to the logic of the world market economy. They can be forgotten by the North, whose aid to them, extended during the Cold War, has been diverted to former state socialist countries that carry greater political and economic weight for the industrialized North. While exploitation is peripheralization by commission, this neglect is marginalization by omission. The problem will not be solved on the basis of the logic of capitalist market economy unless the logic of market is counteracted by the forces struggling for democracy and human rights. This is another area

where alternative democratic economic development from a global perspective is badly needed.

C. Human Rights/Culture/Population Problematique

The issue of human rights has recently been conceptualized by a growing number of people in connection with two issue areas—culture and demography.

First, the question posed by some non-Western regimes concerns whether human rights are universal or essentially Western. There is no doubt that the cultural relativism that underlies this argument has been quite useful in revealing and demystifying the *cultural* imperialism of the West that historically served to rationalize Western political and economic imperialism. At the same time, cultural relativism has often been used by non-Western regimes to rationalize the local oppression and authoritarian rule infringing upon the rights and dignity of the local people. The concept of human rights as a universal standard, therefore, is a useful criterion for the critique of local tyranny; but it may provide a rationale for the penetration and imposition of Western values. These are the subtle dilemmas of cultural relativism.

Without going further into the detail of epistemological argument,⁵ we can point out that, while we must acknowledge that the value of cultural diversity and the universality of human rights have yet to be synthesized, it is increasingly recognized worldwide as self-evident that a culture that defies the basic needs and fundamental rights of its people cannot claim the right to cultural relativity. In other words, the universality of the right to cultural relativity is an idea that has been advanced through the process of contemporary historical dialectics. In fact, it is one of the consequences of the struggle for a deepening of democracy that is under way on an increasingly universal scale.

The fact that the argument made by a political regime—not by individual thinkers—in favor of cultural relativity is found mostly in developing countries indicates that the issue is a dimension of the problem of uneven development. In this respect, the insistence on cultural relativity may be interpreted

to be a demand for cultural equality to make up for the inequality in economic, technological, political, and other areas.

Second, the issue of human rights has been and will be closely linked with the question of population explosion.

In modern history, importance was attached to population first as military manpower and then, in the course of capitalist industrialization, as skilled and unskilled labor force. Whether as military manpower or industrial manpower, population has long been treated as one of the *objective* factors of production and growth. The manipulation of population increase or decrease under the Nazi and other racist regimes was the most grotesque admission of treating population as an *object*.

In the post-World War II period, an increasing number of regimes have been compelled to treat population as subjects because population has become a numerical expression of the *people* with whom sovereignty resides. Population has become a quantitative sum total of the subjects of human rights.

In the past, "overpopulation" was often adjusted through war, genocide, and/or plague. Today, a regime that adopts this scheme will lose legitimacy and is likely to crumble. At the same time, the inviolability of the right and dignity of the people has apparently made it difficult for a regime to enforce population control from above.

According to a recent forecast by the World Bank, the world population will reach 8.5 billion in the year 2030. No doubt this is a demographic manifestation of uneven world mal-development. The population explosion in the South reveals the complex conflict between the adverse effects of mal-development and the growing awareness of the rights of the people that no "legitimate" political regime can readily ignore. However, this will be a situation that will hamper the very realization of human rights of the people. This will be a bleak prospect that may aggravate the perceived zero-sum situation that may precipitate a "democratic bankruptcy" — if not a "demographic war" — unless democratic development is put into effect. (Note the case of Rwanda.)

D. Environment/Democracy Problematique

The demographic crisis that involves resource mal-consumption of necessity aggravates environmental decay. Development of industrial capitalism has increased the consumption of natural resources at an almost exponential rate, particularly since the 1960s, when the East and South as well as the West embarked on high rate of economic growth as if it were a good in itself. Thus, for instance, carbon dioxide in the air, which had increased by 14 percent from 1860 to 1960 (in itself a dramatic change in the long history of humankind), began to increase by the annual rate of 5 percent. Further, to the extent industrial growth was uneven, resource consumption was mainly devoted to the interest of the North. The North has been taking preemptive action vis-à-vis the South in depleting resources, raising the fundamental issue of the equitable allocation of the resources of the globe that are the common heritage of humankind. This is another manifestation of the contradiction between uneven development and democratic world order.

However, if the equitable allocation of resources will have to be achieved through the mechanical universalization of the present and prospective levels of consumption of the North, an ecological catastrophe on a global scale will be hard to avoid. The Benthamite principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, which, in effect, was the ideology of the early phase of capitalist growth premised on the perceived infinity of the environment, will turn out to be self-defeating. It should be clear that "limits to growth" pose a fundamental challenge to the C-N-D core bloc model, which has historically been associated with the liberal myth of modernity that posits the harmony of the maximization of private interests and that of public interests. Here again, the "triumph" of the C-N-D model has made its contradictions all the more pronounced. In order to cope with the environmental crisis, the concept of democracy must be deepened, adding to it a new dimension of ecological harmony that concerns the *quality* of democratic life. This will probably call for a spiritual deepening rather than the material improvement of civil society.

VI. Agency

A. The State Eroded

While the nature and magnitude of these problems have become global, the agents who deal with them remain essentially national. This incongruence between the global character of fundamental problematiques and the state system that provides the framework of response is one of the salient features of today's world. The problematiques have surpassed the actors in scale and magnitude.

This incongruence has much to do with the structural components of the C-N-D model. Industrial capitalism (C) has been the primary engine of globalizing the problematiques. Democracy, while promoting the transnational penetration of its ideology and movements, still remains primarily within the institutional framework of the "sovereign nation-state" (N). Political democracy is largely a national democracy (N-D). This incongruence is a reflection of the deeper uneven development that is eroding the state system.

First, as capitalism has incorporated the whole world into a single market economy, it has accelerated a twofold erosion of the *sovereignty* of the state. On one hand, the economy has gained globality, transcending the nation-state; on the other, the free market has attained within the individual state a higher degree of autonomy, making the state less important for the economic life in civil society.

Second, political democracy, though predominantly within the framework of nation-state, has posed a twofold challenge to the *authority* of the state. On one hand, the state has turned into an instrumental mechanism in order to meet the welfare and human rights requirements of the people; on the other, with the diffusion of ideological coherence and the mounting popular pressures for interest articulation, the political party has weakened its credibility and efficacy as the solid vehicle of national integration, thereby giving rise to perpetual instability of the political regime based on a precarious coalition of diverse interests. Hence, capitalism and democracy are eroding the old world order based on the state system, thus generating a "world disorder."

These dynamics of change, however, have taken contrasting forms depending upon the structural context of transformation. In the North, erosion of the state system has been compensated by the creation or strengthening of international organizations. This is best illustrated by the European Union. Further, the forces of internationalization/regionalization in Europe have been counteracted by the movements for democratization that are also expressing themselves through international institutions such as the European Parliament. The UN Security Council, which is under the virtual control of the United States plus Britain and France, as well as G-7 and NAFTA are all operated with a view to establishing an international order geared to the promotion of the Northern regional interests.

In the South, as tragically exemplified by sub-Saharan African states (and, to a lesser extent, by the transition states of the former socialist camp), the ruthless penetration of world capitalist market economy has brought about even the disintegration of the state as the result of the disappearance of the traditional mutual aid community; exodus of peasants and proliferation of shantytowns; intensified disparity between rich and poor; corruption resulting from the commodification of political power; mushrooming organized crime, drug traffic, and violence; genocide of the common people by armed gangs and disorganized army; and a deluge of refugees. All of this points to the incapacity of the state to maintain order and authority.

Further, introduction or imposition of a spurious multiparty system under the pressure of the Western and IMF political conditionality gave birth not to pluralistic democracy but to the bloody rivalry of the plurality of tribes, clans, and religious sects. This is not simply an ethno-national conflict; conflict within ethno-national groups is equally intense. This is a disorder rooted in poverty, disparity, and a scramble for resources.

If the state is being debilitated as the main pillar of world order, we must examine the role to be played by nonstate actors on two levels, namely the people and international organizations.

B. Transnational Citizens

What, then, does this erosion of the state imply for the people of the world?

For the citizens of the North, the logical conclusion of the erosion of the state's sovereignty and authority is the reinforcement of the citizens' transnational network of human solidarity parallel to and as a countervailing force against the strengthening of intergovernmental organizations and multinational corporate market forces. As the activities of a number of NGOs demonstrate, citizens' transnational solidarity is no longer a lofty ideal; it is a reality that has been cumulatively established. On many African scenes of tragedy, it has been the NGOs, such as Médecins sans Frontières, who came to help the local people much ahead of the UN peacekeeping, disaster/refugee relief contingents recruited from member states.

For the people of the South, however, the picture is different. The erosion of state sovereignty and authority implies bleak prospects for the self-reliant development strategy that aims at building an autonomous "strong state" as a vehicle for economic development and democracy within the national framework, opening it to the international market selectively and step by step. Instead, underdeveloped countries may have to take an unprecedented course of combining a "soft state," mostly in the form of a multiethnic federal state, with strong international governmental and transnational nongovernmental cooperation. Thus, a greater role of citizens of the North will be called for in reinforcing cooperation with the people in the South.

What is common to the people of the North and the South is the inevitable weakening of loyalty to the state and the search for a strengthening of transnational solidarity as human beings.

C. The United Nations System

The other nonstate actors that seek to transcend the individual sovereign state are international organizations, of which the most global in terms of membership and functions is the United Nations system.

There are at least three major functions that the UN is expected to perform: (1) reflection of conflict and the articulation

of issues in its agenda, (2) legitimation of the standards and norms according to which the conflict should be resolved, and (3) actual conflict resolution. Views diverge as to whether the UN has met the expectations of its founders. General assessment seems to be that the achievement score has been in the above order, with the reflection function and the legitimation function being more successful than the resolution function. The achievement score must be examined in relation to the issue areas the UN has been dealing with, namely (a) peace and security, (b) development, (c) decolonization, (d) human rights, and (e) environment. Since the issue areas on which the UN has primarily focused have been changing, reflecting the changing realities of the world, a brief historical summary of the UN's role in defining its role is in order.

The history of the UN can be roughly divided into four phases. The first was from its inception to the early 1960s, when the primary focus of concern was on "peace and security." This was natural in view of the fact that the memory of the largest war in history, World War II, was still very vivid in the minds of the people of the world. Further, the fear of another world war, a war of nuclear annihilation, was menacing all nations of the world. The second phase was the 1960s. The main focus was on "decolonization and development," reflecting the crucial interests of the emerging nations in Asia and Africa. In the third phase, which began in the 1970s, "environment and human rights" came to the fore. We are now in the fourth phase, post-Cold War, in which concern for "peace and security" has reemerged coupled with that of "human rights."

This summary does not imply that each phase was preoccupied with specific issues to the exclusion of others. There was, however, a notable shift of the primary focus, the UN's ceaseless involvement in all issues notwithstanding.

Beyond the shift of focus, what is more significant is the change in the manner in which relations between the issues were conceptualized. In the first phase, "peace and security" was considered the ultimate goal. "Development" was, of course, taken up; but it was done so because poverty was considered a cause of war. "Decolonization" was dealt with because colonialism was considered a cause of war. "Human rights" were seriously debated as illustrated by the adoption of the Uni-

versal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948; but underlying this concern about human rights was the view that a state whose regime violated human rights at home was likely to take an aggressive policy abroad in violation of the rights of other nations. In short, decolonization, development, and human rights were prerequisites for, or the means to, "peace and security."

In the second phase, each began to be recognized as an end in itself. "Decolonization," for example, was considered a goal independent of "peace," hence the endorsement of the armed struggle for national liberation. A certain degree of East-West *détente* enabled nations of the world to pursue development goals irrespective of their implications for international peace and security.

In the third phase, however, a critical review of development programs, such as the UN Decade of Development, led to a new emphasis on environment and the quality of life, namely the implications for the life of humanity, which, in turn, was linked with the concern about human rights. Further, doubt was cast at the superpowers' equation of "peace and security" with "mutual nuclear deterrence" because the latter tended to rationalize the "condominium" and the continued nuclear arms race of the superpowers. The catastrophic implications of the danger of nuclearism for the environment and the right to survival of humanity were unmistakably revealed by the Chernobyl incident. Finally, there was a growing awareness that "national liberation" had not necessarily led to the "liberation of the people." In other words, "peace and security," "national liberation," "development," and "environment" all began to be considered as the requisites for the realization of the ultimate goal, i.e., human rights. There has been an important reversal of the means-end relation, all converging on the rights and dignity of human beings.

Against this background, it is a small wonder that the fourth phase has witnessed the combination of the renewed interest in "peace and security" with the continued concern for "human rights," as exemplified by the primary focus of attention placed by the United Nations on "humanitarian intervention."

These changes in thinking, which underlie the redefinition of the goal and role of the United Nations, have implications of

great importance in two respects. On one hand, the changes are the manifestations of the historic dynamic of global democratization discussed above. They are rooted in the macrohistorical realities of the universalization of democratic (D) norms and principles underway.

On the other hand, the convergence on human rights has revealed the fundamental limitations of the United Nations. Institutionally, the UN is an organization of states, not of the people; and, politically, the regimes of many member states are, in practice, still far from democratic.

VII. Conclusion: Toward a Democratic World Organization

Resolution of this dilemma calls for a radical transformation of the principles and constitution of the United Nations in order to make it a democratic body with the participation of the citizens of the world, but that is not forthcoming. Numerous proposals on UN reform have been presented; and many more will come in conjunction with its fiftieth anniversary; but significant reforms are unlikely to materialize because the proposals are prepared for the deliberation of those who have vested interests in the present UN system and/or state system.

Yet, the tide for global democratization must not be stemmed lest the United Nations become a reactionary and burdensome entity. To link the UN system with democracy, the UN must integrate into its operation the growing role played by citizens in building transnational networks. The following are some feasible proposals that are illustrative of the steps toward significant but gradual democratic reform of the UN system.

Peacekeeping operations, to which the post-Cold War United Nations gave highest priority, has run into difficulty mainly because of the conflict between the national interest considerations of member states on one hand and the human interest considerations that ought to be espoused by the UN on the other. The decision taken by the United States on May 5, 1994, to give priority to national interest considerations when asked by the United Nations to take part in peacekeeping operations is a case in point. This dilemma was highlighted by the conflict between the objective of the U.S. military (which was professedly the maintenance of "national security") and, for instance, the mis-

sion of U.S. soldiers in Somalia who had to risk their lives despite the uncertainty over whether the U.S. national interest was really at stake. As long as the UN relies on the supply of national contingents by its member states, which is a diversion from the original objective of the army and the recruited soldiers, there is always the danger that UN peacekeeping operations will be paralyzed.

To avoid this problem, Brian Urquhart has suggested that the United Nations organize its own volunteer force.⁶ Although the idea has merits, it has a drawback if the UN force is for peace-enforcement, i.e. combat, operation as well. The idea of UN combat operation amounts to the idea of "just war by the United Nations," on which no global consensus has been formed. Is the United Nations entitled to kill noncombatant citizens for the maintenance of "international peace and security" or for "humanitarian purposes"? How many unhumanitarian acts may the United Nations commit in order to enforce humanitarian intervention? These questions remain unanswered.

In the absence of a plausible theory of just UN war, the mission of the United Nations should be confined to noncombative peacekeeping operations essentially based on prior diplomatic accommodations and the subsequent consent of the parties in conflict. A more conceivable alternative to the UN volunteer force would be the establishment of a volunteer UN peacekeeping corps in each country. Since it is not for combat purposes, it should be separate from the national army. A peacekeeping corps not for killing even at a place where killing is committed by the parties in conflict obviously requires special training different from the ordinary discipline of regular armed forces. The corps would be an armored police force rather than the army. The UN standby force in the Nordic countries has been organized along these lines. The time has come to urge member states to set up the peacekeeping corps specialized in UN police functions.

In addition to the police component, civilian corps for medical, construction, transportation, communication, administrative, and educational purposes should be organically composed; but, except for the period of special training, the volunteers in these civilian corps may stay in the regular workplace as professionals earmarked for UN operation, thus serving to link the

United Nations directly with *civil society* as well as with the state. It would be financed mainly by the government but may also be supported by citizens' contributions. If the peacekeeping corps is established in many countries, standardization of equipment and the code of conduct to improve its efficiency in international joint action would be facilitated and a sense of transnational solidarity of citizens enhanced.

In a similar vein, a UN peace corps for development and environment should be established in as many developed countries as possible. In most countries in the North, a peace corps or an aid institution has been at work; but, again, it is a national governmental institution primarily intended to serve national interests on a bilateral basis even though it may take an altruistic form. Time has come to reorganize these national institutions so that they will constitute a worldwide multilateral UN network of the Peace Corps for "sustainable development." It should be a corps earmarked for UN activities, consisting of volunteers with professional skills higher than those of the present Peace Corps but with the same spirit of spontaneous dedication. The present UN Volunteer Program is too small to meet the needs of the people in the South. A large number of people experienced and skilled in agriculture, forestry, water utilization, medicine, small- and medium-scale industries, and other fields should be able to participate in the UN network as volunteer citizens.

Democratization of the world organization, the United Nations, cannot be achieved by such measures as expanding the membership of the Security Council—with or without veto—or even by elevating the status of the General Assembly. In the final analysis, it is individual human beings, not the state, who can be the subject of democratic rights. The group right of national self-determination is important, but equality of nations is important because it is a necessary condition for fulfilling the equal rights of individual human beings, not the other way around. Through the direct participation of a sizable number of individual volunteers in UN operations for coping with world disorder, these citizens will gain greater voice in redefining the role to be played by the United Nations, particularly in the field, as one of the key engines of the fundamental historical dynamic of the universalization and deepening of democracy.

Notes

1. "Ism" in this paper refers not to ideology alone but to historical forces that constitute a particular dynamic of, in Anthony Giddens's terminology, "structuration." "Nationalism" refers to the primary political orientation to the self-identified "sovereign nation-state," which is an "imagined community." In this respect, both "imperialist" nationalism and "anti-imperialist" nationalism are included in "state nationalism." Since any "nation-state" comprises more than one nationality, "state nationalism" embodies the nationalism of the dominant national or ethnic group in the state. For further detail of the three dimensions of modern world conflict, see Yoshikazu Sakamoto, ed., "Perspective on Changing World Order: A Conceptual Prelude," in *Global Transformation: Challenges to the State System* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1994).
2. Frank M. Russell, *Theories of International Relations* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1936) and Torbjorn L. Knutsen, *A History of International Relations Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).
3. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).
4. One of the earliest formulations of these problematiques in terms of "world order values" was done by the World Order Models Project. See, for instance, Saul H. Mendlovitz, ed., *On the Creation of a Just World Order* (New York: The Free Press, 1975).
5. See Yoshikazu Sakamoto, "Human Rights Are Universal," *UNESCO Courier* (August–September, 1982).
6. Brian Urquhart, "Can the UN Work?" *New York Review of Books*, 12 May 1994.